

Jim Doyle  
Governor

Karen E. Timberlake  
Secretary



**State of Wisconsin**  
Department of Health Services

**DIVISION OF LONG TERM CARE**

1 WEST WILSON STREET  
PO BOX 7851  
MADISON WI 53707-7851

Telephone: 608-266-0036  
FAX: 608-266-2579  
TTY: 888-241-9432  
dhs.wisconsin.gov

May 13, 2010

Geri Rettler, Deputy Director  
Fond du Lac County Department of Community Programs  
459 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Fond du Lac, WI 54935

Dear Ms. Rettler:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and learn more about Fond du Lac County's Birth to 3 Program. It was a delight to engage in meaningful conversation on topics relevant to your program and team. Below, please find a summary of your program review process.

Following the completion of Fond du Lac County's self-assessment in April 2010, your review team identified topics of interest for discussion and further review. These items along with additional topics and activities identified by the state review team became the agenda for the on-site visit. This agenda is attached.

The state review team visited Fond du Lac County on May 4, 2010. The state team assembled for the on-site visit included Lori Wittemann and Sue Larsen (via phone) from the State Birth to 3 Office at Department of Health Services (DHS) and Rene' Forsythe with the RESource Training and Technical Assistance Project. We appreciate that you made yourself available to participate in the program review process along with the following individuals:

**County Review Team**

- |                   |                             |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Diane Fett      | Program Director            |
| • Tanya Tautges   | Teacher/Service Coordinator |
| • Heather Reilley | Teacher/Service Coordinator |
| • Katie Hall      | Teacher/Service Coordinator |
| • Becky Hoffman   | Teacher/Service Coordinator |
| • Terri Nickel    | Program Assistant           |

**Fiscal Conversation**

- |                  |                             |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Ken Gabrielson | Accounting Services Manager |
| • Jim Lepinski   | Accountant                  |

**Meet and Greet Lunch**

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| • David Boelter      | Executive Director, The Arc of Fond du Lac |
| • Marian Sommerfeldt | Manager, The Arc of Fond du Lac            |
| • Susan Stone        | SLP, Stone Speech Therapy                  |
| • Heather Switz      | PT, The Arc of Fond du Lac                 |

***Wisconsin.gov***

- Angie Dodge                      APT, The Arc of Fond du Lac
- Mary Anne Burman            OT, The Arc of Fond du Lac
- Janet Martin                    OTR, St. Agnes Hospital

Participation from the individuals directly involved in providing and coordinating services to families along with program administration allowed us to see how the Birth to 3 Program operates in Fond du Lac County.

This review process in conjunction with your self-assessment is designed to assess Fond du Lac County's implementation of early intervention services according to federal and state regulations found in Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Chapter DHS 90, Wis. Adm. Code. Federal regulations (34 CFR 303.501) require that the Department of Health Services monitor programs to ensure that they comply with federal law, provide technical assistance, and if necessary, correct deficiencies that are identified through monitoring.

In preparation for the on-site visit, the state review team was able to compare the data presented in your Self-Assessment Report to Program Participation System (PPS) reports. On-site, we also verified the data in three files selected from the files the team originally reviewed during the self assessment process. In addition, your team provided comprehensive referral data collected to support child find planning. The Interagency Agreement between Fond du Lac County and area schools was shared as well as Fond du Lac County's Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) that incorporates collecting Office of Special Education Program (OSEP) Child Outcome information.

The review team had in-depth conversations and had the opportunity to learn more about your program, accomplishments, and broad community involvement. For example, we discussed the program's efforts and success with providing consistency and commitment to both families and community partners. We reviewed the thorough child monitoring process including a *watch and see* rather than *wait and see* approach. We learned more about Fond du Lac County's well developed and connected informed referral network and the efforts taken to maintain and enhance this. In addition, the county team has prioritized meeting with each other and with contracted providers to enhance working relationships and collaboration. The program has built internal mechanisms for collecting and monitoring data related to state and federal regulations; these have proven successful as Fond du Lac County is able to maintain compliance.

Fond du Lac County Birth to 3 is involved in many initiatives to create a supportive, connected, and resource rich community for all children and families living in Fond du Lac County. An example of this is the stepping into the creation of an on-line data management system for developmental screenings. Fond du Lac County Birth to 3 and other Partners are also in the process of publishing a community wide Infant Mental Health Plan. The Birth to 3 Program will be supporting one of its speech and language pathologists to become Hanen trained to be able to collaborate with other community partners to support families in helping their children communicate. Fond du Lac Birth to 3 has also partnered with Sheboygan and Manitowoc counties Birth to 3 Programs to participate in the Crossing Borders Initiative to bring additional evidence-based and relationship-based service approaches to their enrolled families.

Through your self-assessment process along with the discussions that occurred at the on-site visit, your team identified the following idea as one to explore and develop further:

- Continue the combined effort to implement developmental screenings across community partners and consider how this best fits into the current referral, intake and data collection processes for the Birth to 3 Program.

In reviewing documentation from the last federal fiscal year, 7/1/08-6/30/09, the review team would like to commend you on your very quick correction of the identified findings of non-compliance. The following corrections have been made to your program:

Indicator 7: 100% of eligible infants and toddlers with IFSPs receive an evaluation and assessment and an initial IFSP meeting conducted within the Part C 45-day timeline. (20 U.S.C. 1416(a) (3) (B) and 1442)

Indicator 8: 100% of all children exiting Part C at age three receive timely transition planning to support the child's transition to preschool and other appropriate community services by their third birthday including:

- A. IFSP with transition steps
  - B. Notification to LEA, if child is potentially eligible for Part B; and
  - C. Transition conference, if child is potentially eligible for Part B.
- (20 U.S.C. 1416(a) (3) (B) and 1442)

In conclusion, Fond du Lac County Birth to 3 is able to meet all expectations and consistently goes above and beyond to provide quality services to children and families in the program. The Birth to 3 Program is also a visible community partner that has involvement in initiatives within and beyond the Birth to 3 realm. Any outcomes your team identifies on the Program in Partnership Plan (PIPP) will be seen as enhancements to the program. All outcomes on your PIPP will help guide the technical assistance provided by your RESource facilitator. Rene' Forsythe will be in contact soon to share the draft PIPP that was developed at the on-site visit.

In closing, we'd like to once again thank you for the opportunity to review the Fond du Lac County Birth to 3 Program. Your cooperativeness with completing the self-assessment, devising the agenda for the on-site visit, and hospitality was much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Lori Wittemann  
Program & Policy Specialist  
DHS/Birth to 3

Cc: Diane Fett, Birth to 3 Director  
Rene' Forsythe, RESource  
Corinne McFarlane, Area Coordinator